

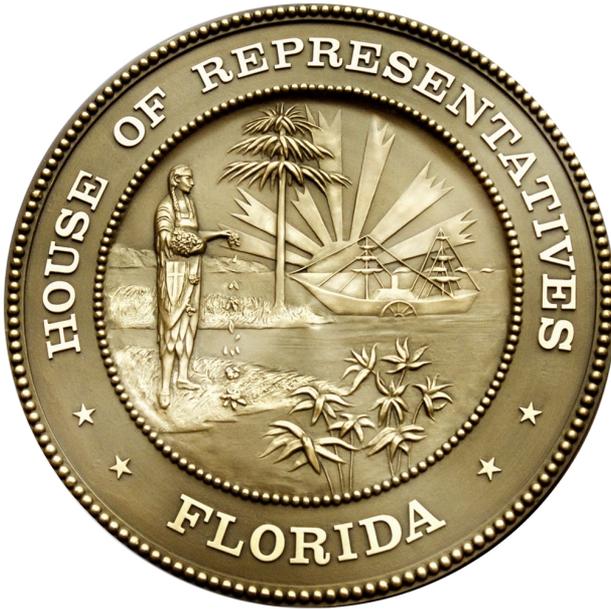
FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



LANGUAGE OF THE LEGISLATURE

A QUICK GUIDE TO TERMS AND ACRONYMS

The Florida House of Representatives



Language of the Legislature

**A publication compiled by
the Office of the Clerk**

Tallahassee
2021

-A-

ACT A bill that has passed both houses of the Legislature, been signed by the Governor, and is published annually in the bound volumes of the *Laws of Florida*.

See **STATUTES**

ACTION PACKET A document that details the outcome of votes on each bill and any other official committee action taken during a meeting. It also lists the names and contact information of individuals who testified before the committee.

ADJOURNMENT The House of Representatives either ends its business day by adjourning until a stated time on another day or upon the call of the Chair. The Senate's terminology for ending its business day is "recess." *Sine die* ("without day") adjournment is the final action of a legislative session.

See **SINE DIE**

ADOPTED Resolutions, memorials, motions, and amendments are "adopted"; bills are "passed." Adopt means to consent to or accept; pass means to enact by the requisite number of votes. In the Florida Legislature, resolutions (except joint resolutions) and amendments are usually adopted by a voice vote. Bills, as required by the Constitution, are passed by the recorded votes of a majority of the members present. Joint resolutions are passed by a three-fifths vote of the membership.

See **PASSED; EXTRAORDINARY VOTE**

ADVISE AND CONSENT

See **CONFIRMATION**

AGENDA A list of business, including proposed legislation, to be considered at a committee meeting. An agenda is included in the official notice of a meeting.

AMENDMENT Changes in any bill or other proposed legislation may be offered by a committee or an individual legislator in the form of an amendment to a specific portion of the pending bill. All amendments receive a six-digit identifying bar code when filed. As with bills, House amendments are odd-numbered and Senate amendments are even-numbered.

An amendment may be offered in four forms:

- (1) an amendment to the pending bill;
- (2) an amendment to the amendment;
- (3) a substitute amendment; and
- (4) an amendment to the substitute.

For example, after the amendatory process in the House has been completed and

the bill is passed and sent to the Senate, the Senate may begin the amendatory process again. Upon return of the bill, the House may concur in the Senate amendment(s), refuse to concur and ask the Senate to recede, or amend the Senate amendment.

AMENDMENT, CONSTITUTIONAL

See **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, STATE**

AMENDMENTS, TECHNICAL

See **TECHNICAL AMENDMENT**

ANNOUNCING According to the Rules of the House and Senate, presiding officers shall “announce” the result to the body, and the action shall be recorded in the *Journal*.

APPEARANCE RECORDS Also called an appearance card, this is a form that is filled out by anyone who wants to testify during a committee meeting. This will state their position on the item and if they are speaking on behalf of an organization. The appearance records are recorded in the committee meeting report. The form also allows someone who is testifying to waive their time for or against a measure.

APPOINTMENT The selection by some authority—Speaker, President, or Governor for example—of a person to perform a responsibility.

APPORTIONMENT

See **REAPPORTIONMENT** and **REDISTRICTING**

APPROPRIATIONS BILLS Bills authorizing the spending of public money. These bills are effective for only one fiscal year, July 1 – June 30.

See **CONFORMING BILLS**; **GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL**; **IMPLEMENTING BILL**

APPROPRIATIONS PROJECT BILL A bill requesting funding for a specific project in the General Appropriations Act.

See **APPROPRIATIONS BILLS**; **CONFORMING BILLS**; **GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL**

AUDITOR GENERAL The Constitution, in Article III, Section 2, says, “The legislature shall appoint an auditor to serve at its pleasure who shall audit public records and perform related duties as prescribed by law or concurrent resolution.”

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BAR CODE House and Senate bills and amendments are bar coded so they can be scanned for display purposes on an overhead display board. This is done as a convenience for members in the Chamber so they can see what is up for consideration.

BICAMERAL A legislature with two houses: in Florida, a Senate and a House of Representatives. Today only Nebraska has a *unicameral*, or one-house, state legislature. Florida had a one-house legislature between 1822 and 1838.

BILL A proposed change to Florida Law. Any legislator, all standing committees and subcommittees, and some select committees may introduce bills. Each bill receives an identifying number when it is filed with the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate. Beginning in 1990, House bills have been odd-numbered and Senate bills have been even-numbered.

Bills include: House bills (HB) and Senate bills (SB); House joint resolutions (HJR) and Senate joint resolutions (SJR) for proposed constitutional amendments; House resolutions (HR) and Senate resolutions (SR), which are generally expressions of approval or recognition; House memorials (HM) and Senate memorials (SM), used to voice concerns and indicate opinions to the U.S. Congress; and House concurrent resolutions (HCR) and Senate concurrent resolutions (SCR), used to voice the opinion of both houses, to express rejection or ratification of amendments to the U.S. Constitution, and to extend sessions.

BILL DRAFTING Offices in the House and Senate that are charged with writing bills and amendments at the request of members of their respective chamber. In drafting legislation, when text is underlined, it would be added to statute by the bill; if the text is stricken through, it would be removed from statute by the bill.

BILL HISTORY A list showing the status and prior actions on all legislation. This information can be found on the Legislature's websites, www.myfloridahouse.gov and www.flsenate.gov, in several forms. On the House site, the "Bills" section lists bills numerically and carries the full bill history.

BOARD, THE A commonly used term to describe the electronic voting system in the House or Senate.
See **ELECTRONIC VOTING**

BODY A term used to describe one house of the Legislature.

BOUNCE When a bill is sent to the other body in a message.

BUBBLE In the Chamber of the House, on each side at the rear, there are two small glass-enclosed areas. These are known as the “bubbles.” They are used for conferences by small groups of legislators during sessions. The term “bubble” was originally coined as a reference to the round glass meeting room in the northwest corner of the old House Chamber.

BUDGET Also known as the General Appropriations Act, this is the money Florida’s government spends in the fiscal year. The Florida Legislature must pass a balanced budget each year. After passing this, the Governor, in signing the budget into law, may line-item veto items in the budget.

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CALENDAR The Calendar lists meetings of committees scheduled for that day. Like the *Journal*, the Calendars are initially released through the Internet and available on the House website. Printed forms of these documents are available to legislators and the public on the morning of each legislative day throughout the Capitol and online at myfloridahouse.gov.

“Calendar” can be used in an intangible sense as a stage in the process of making a bill eligible for consideration. As such, the Calendar also refers to a printed listing of the bills and other proposed legislation by short title reported from committees and ready for final passage. Bills listed here are those on Second Reading, Special Order, Third Reading, and Unfinished Business.

CALL, THE A proclamation of the Governor or of the presiding officers of the House and Senate convening the Legislature in Special Session that also states the necessity for the session. The Legislature is restricted to considering only matters pertaining directly to the Call unless two-thirds of the members elected to each house vote to consider a bill on another subject.

CARRIED “Carried” is the same as “adopted.”

See **ADOPTED**

CAUCUS In the Florida Legislature, a caucus is most commonly used as a meeting of legislators of a political party. The Republican and Democratic caucuses have designated legislative officers and their own rules by which they are governed.

See **CONFERENCE**

CENSURE A resolution adopted by a house of the Legislature condemning the conduct of one of its members or of some other public official—a step short of either expulsion or impeachment.

CHAIR The presiding officer for a floor session or committee meeting. For

example, a member may inquire, “How did the Chair rule on the point of order?” or respond, “The Chair rules the amendment out of order.” Use of the word “chair” draws attention to the office rather than the individual who occupies it.

See **SPEAKER**

CHAMBER The large rooms in which the Senate or the House meets. Both chambers are located on the fourth floor of the Capitol.

See **WELL**

CHAPLAIN A member of the clergy who is designated by the presiding officer for the institution.

CHAPTER LAW When an individual bill is enacted into law at a particular legislative session, it is assigned a chapter law number by the Secretary of State. The chapter law number indicates the year passed and the printing sequence number. Chapter laws are collected and published annually in the *Laws of Florida*.

CITATION As it relates to bill drafting, a citation is a specific reference to a section, subsection, or paragraph of the law, or to another portion of the bill.

CITIZENS’ INITIATIVE The people may propose the revision or amendment of any part of the Florida Constitution. This may be accomplished by filing with the Secretary of State a petition containing a copy of the revision or amendment proposed, signed by a number of electors “in each of one half of the congressional districts of the state, and of the state as a whole, equal to eight percent of the votes cast in each of such districts respectively and in the state as a whole in the last preceding election in which presidential electors were chosen.” Article XI, Section 3, of Florida’s Constitution does not provide for passage of general laws by initiative.

CLAIM BILL A bill that compensates a particular individual or entity for injuries or losses caused by the negligence or error of a public officer or agency. It is a means by which an injured party may recover damages in excess of the statutory limits on judgments against government entities or if a public officer or agency involved is immune from suit. Majority approval in both chambers of the Legislature is required for passage.

See **LAWS, RELIEF OR CLAIM; SPECIAL MASTER**

CLERK/SECRETARY The Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate are constitutional officers designated by their appropriate body. They have the responsibility of recording the transit of bills from bill filing, to delivery of enrolled (passed) bills to the Governor. Committees report to the Clerk and Secretary the action taken on bills referred to them. These officers are the official record keepers of formal action taken by their respective houses.

Aside from the safeguarding of legislation, the offices of the Clerk and Secretary draft and print two primary daily publications, the *Journal* and the *Calendar*. The *Journal* is a record of the official actions in the Chamber and committees and subcommittees. The *Calendar* records the scheduling of chamber and committee activity as well as providing notice of bills coming before the body for consideration. Copies of legislative documents are printed and distributed on demand by their respective print shops, duplicating rooms, and document offices.

CLERK'S MANUAL A convenient-sized book published every two years by the Clerk of the House that contains photographs and biographical information about each member of the House and Senate and lists committee memberships and other useful information.

CLINIC The medical clinic was established in the Capitol in 1967. It is staffed year-round by two registered nurses. On session days in the Capitol, a “Doctor of the Day” joins the staff.

CO-INTRODUCER The Senator introducing a bill is known as the introducer, and his or her name appears first on the sponsor list and in the *Journal*. All others who “sign on” afterwards are known as co-introducers.

COMFORT LANGUAGE Typically, this is when part of a bill is changed to provide clarity and, in doing so, comfort to a person/group.

COMMIT To refer, as a bill to a committee.

See **RECOMMIT**

COMMITTEE A group of legislators chosen by the presiding officer to perform specific functions. Legislatures use a number of committees.

The most familiar are *standing*, which are those with a continuing responsibility in a general field of legislative activity.

There are also *select* committees, whose members are “selected” to do a particular job, for example, to study alcoholic beverage laws.

A *conference* committee may be appointed by the House Speaker and the Senate President to see what can be done when the houses have agreed in principle but disagree in detail on a specific piece of legislation. By bringing together interested members of the two houses, agreement often can be reached that might not be possible if the houses had to limit their negotiations to shuttling the bills back and forth in messages.

Joint committees are composed of House and Senate members.

Subcommittees are also smaller groups of members that are organizationally under committees and deal with a more specific function than committees.

See **CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**; **SELECT COMMITTEE**;
SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE REPORT A summary of the committee meeting on a bill. This will include names of people who publicly testified, actions on amendments to the bill, and the final action for the committee on the bill (favorable, favorable with committee substitute, or unfavorable).

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE A bill that has been amended in a committee. CS/HB is a committee substitute for a House bill and CS for SB is a committee substitute for a Senate bill.

COMMUNICATION When the Governor sends a message to the Legislature, in person or by writing. Generally, the communication of the Governor is “spread upon the *Journal*” by being printed in the official record of the proceedings.

See **MESSAGE**

COMPANION BILL When bills substantially worded the same and identical as to specific intent and purpose are filed in the House and Senate. The purpose is to expedite progress by having simultaneous movement in both houses on the proposal. When a house passes its bill, the sponsor in the other house must be careful to substitute this companion there. Otherwise, each house may pass its own bill, and neither becomes law. While both houses may have acted on identical text, each will have passed a separate bill.

See **CROSS**

CONCURRENCE When one house agrees to an amendment adopted by the other house. After concurring in the amendment, a vote is taken again on the passage of the bill as amended.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION A formal expression of the opinion of both legislative houses. A concurrent resolution may, for example, offer the Legislature’s recognition of an honor or achievement of an individual or group. It also may be used to mourn the passing of a distinguished citizen. Usually, a concurrent resolution applies to non-lawmaking matters, but an exception is the use of a concurrent resolution to express Florida’s ratification or rejection of an amendment to the United States Constitution. Concurrent resolutions are also used to extend sessions and can be used to call the Legislature into joint session.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE A conference committee is actually two committees, one from each house, meeting together to work out compromise language acceptable to the Senate and House on some measure when agreement could not be reached through amendments.

A majority of the members of the committee from each house must agree before the conference committee report may be submitted to the Senate and House. Neither house is obligated to accept the report, but they usually do since the alternative could be the failure of the legislation for that session.

Vote on Entirety A conference report differs in importance from the vote in the House and Senate on the original bill because the vote on the conference report is binding. A conference report must be accepted or rejected. It cannot be amended. If rejected, a conference report usually will be recommitted to the conference committee for another try at adjusting the differences.

CONFIRMATION The action of the Senate in agreeing to appointments by the Governor.

See **EXECUTIVE SESSION; SUSPENSION**

CONFORMING BILLS Bills that are included in the conference committee negotiations and are considered necessary to “conform” the Florida Statutes to provide for the fiscal changes implemented by the passage of the General Appropriations Act.

CONSENT CALENDAR The Consent Calendar contains bills of a noncontroversial nature and is usually considered under expedited procedures which the House approves in advance of considering the bills. The consent calendar is voted on with one vote for all bills thereon.

CONSTITUENT A resident of the district being represented by a Representative or Senator.

CONSTITUTION Florida’s Constitution creates the framework of state government and allocates powers to the three branches. Generally speaking, the United States Constitution is a grant of powers, whereas the State Constitution is a limitation.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, STATE Proposals to amend Florida’s Constitution primarily come from two sources. One is an initiative petition of the citizens; the other is a joint resolution passed by a three-fifths vote of the members elected to each legislative body. The proposal must then be ratified by 60 percent of the voters in a general election. Unless otherwise provided by law, amendments go to the electorate at the next regular general election, so long as this election is held more than 90 days after an amendment has been proposed by the Legislature. The Legislature, by a law enacted by three-fourths of the members elected to each house, may provide for a special general election to be held at least 90 days after the Legislature has proposed the amendment. Amendments to the Florida Constitution, when ratified by the electorate, become effective on the first Monday in January following the election, unless some other date is specified in the amendment.

See **CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION, STATE**

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, UNITED STATES An amendment to the Constitution of the United States is ratified by the Florida Legislature by adoption of a concurrent resolution by a majority vote of each house. The amendment must be ratified by two-thirds of states to be added to the Constitution.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION, STATE A Commission that meets every twenty years in order to review and then propose amendments to the Florida Constitution for voter consideration.

There are 37 members appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, and Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. The commission also includes the Attorney General, and the Governor appoints the Chair.

CONTEST

See **SEATING CHALLENGE**

COSPONSOR The House member introducing a bill is known as the first-named sponsor, and his or her name appears first on the sponsor list and in the *Journal*. All others who “sign on” afterwards are known by rule as cosponsors. See **PRIME COSPONSOR**

CROSS Companion measures “cross” when each chamber passes its version of the bill to the other, instead of coordinating to pass the same House or Senate bill for it to become law. This action significantly increases the chances that neither bill will be passed by both chambers.

See **COMPANION BILL**

-D-

DECORUM The reasonable quiet or calm that a Speaker or President seeks to impose upon the body so that business may be conducted in an orderly manner with an appropriateness of appearance, behavior, and conduct. This decorum provides for the ability to be both seen and heard.

DEDICATED FUNDS These are the revenues from specified taxes that can be used only for specified purposes. For example, the gross receipts tax supports the capital outlay and debt services of public education, known as PECO, which stands for Public Education Capital Outlay.

DELEGATION Legislators from the same locality, typically a county. Legislators occasionally will designate themselves as being members of the county’s delegation.

DESK Like the “Chair,” the “desk” possesses a special legislative meaning. The “desk” is the operation performed by the Clerk or Secretary, much of which is

remote in place from the desk at the front of the Chamber, which gave its name to the Clerk or Secretary's responsibilities. The Chamber staff carry out their responsibilities from the desk. Members will sometimes rise during a session to inform the Speaker or President that they have an amendment "on the desk."

DIRECTORY LANGUAGE Every section of a bill that proposes to amend or create any provision of the Florida Statutes is introduced by a statement that identifies the particular statute provision by number and directs the action that is to be taken (e.g., Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) of section 48.23, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:). Thus, these statements have come to be called "directory language" or "directories."

DISCIPLINE As a counterbalance to the legislative power to impeach and convict high officers of the executive and judicial branches, the Constitution provides that the House of Representatives and the Senate may discipline their members.

DISTRICT The area from which a senator or representative is elected. The boundaries of districts are redrawn every 10 years after the federal census figures are received.

DRAFT NUMBER A unique identifier for each bill or amendment draft. The number that appears in the upper left-hand corner of any bill prepared by Senate Bill Drafting and remains there after filing. The draft number for House bills appears in the bottom left-hand corner but disappears at filing.

DROPPING THE HANDKERCHIEF When two houses finish on time and adjourn *sine die* simultaneously, the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms meet in the center of the rotunda between the two Chambers and drop handkerchiefs to symbolize the ending of the legislative session. This ceremony began as a logistical necessity for the two houses to know when the other was gaveling the end of session.

-E-

EFFECTIVE DATES The date when a bill becomes law, should it be passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor.

ELECTRONIC VOTING The device, used in the Florida House of Representatives since 1939 and in the Senate since 1976, by which legislators record their presence and votes by using buttons on their desks. Red and green lights beside their names on the board show how the legislators voted: red for no, green for yes. The roll-call machine automatically totals and reflects the results of the votes. The machine is popularly known as the "board" or "vote board." The Speaker may say when a voice vote produced a questionable result, "Let's put it on the board." All votes on the final passage of bills must be by recorded roll calls. See **BOARD, THE**

ENACTING CLAUSE The Constitution requires that each law be prefaced by the phrase “*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida.*”

ENGROSSED BILL When a bill has been amended, it is written to include the change in language. This version is known as the engrossed bill. This version is done in the house of origin: a Senate amendment to a House bill will be attached and if accepted by the House, the bill will then be engrossed under the supervision of the Clerk of the House. Similarly, a House amendment to a Senate bill, if accepted by the Senate, will be engrossed by the Senate Secretary. A bill may be engrossed more than once.

See **ENROLLED BILL**

ENROLLED BILL After both houses have agreed upon a bill, and it becomes an act, the bill is reformatted and this enrolled version is signed by the Constitutional officers of the House and Senate, sent to the Governor for consideration, and subsequently transmitted to the Secretary of State (unless vetoed during a legislative session). Memorials, Joint Resolutions, and Concurrent Resolutions are filed directly with the Secretary of State.

See **ENGROSSED BILL**

EXECUTIVE SESSION A session the Senate enters for the purpose of considering whether they consent to action by the Governor in appointing persons to, or suspending officers from, certain public offices. This means all persons other than senators and the Secretary may be excluded from the Chamber. The House does not enjoy this constitutional privilege; only the Senate “advises and consents” to executive actions.

EX OFFICIO In the House, the Rules provide that the Speaker and Minority Leader may designate a Representative who does not sit on the committee to act temporarily as an *ex officio* member who may vote on measures in committee generally for a specified period, but is not counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

EXPULSION

See **DISCIPLINE**

EXTENDED SESSION Wherein the regular or special session goes beyond its regularly scheduled and allocated time. An extension requires a three-fifths vote of the members present in each house and is done by a concurrent resolution. The purpose of extending a session is to complete action on legislation that was previously introduced. Additional business may only be considered with the consent of two-thirds of the membership of the respective houses.

See **SESSIONS, LENGTH OF**

EXTRAORDINARY VOTE The State Constitution or Rules of a chamber sometimes require more than a majority vote for certain purposes. In the

absence of an express rule or constitutional requirement, a proposition is carried by a majority of the votes cast. For example, it takes two-thirds of the members voting to override the Governor’s veto or to move to waive the requirement for readings of a bill on separate days.

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FIRST-NAMED SPONSOR The House member initiating the bill drafting request and who files the bill. Over time the words “prime sponsor” have been used to describe the author of a bill, but the Rules of the House describe him or her as the first-named sponsor. The Senate uses the terminology “introducer.” See **PRIME SPONSOR; INTRODUCER**

FIRST READING This constitutional requirement is met when a bill is officially introduced into one of the houses of the Legislature and its title is published in the *Journal*. This constitutes the “first reading” in the *Journal* and also shows the committee to which the presiding officer has referred the bill. See **INTRODUCTION**

FISCAL NOTE A fiscal note is the section of a staff analysis that seeks to estimate the amount of increase or decrease in revenue or expenditures and the present and future fiscal implications of a piece of pending legislation.

FIVE HANDS The Florida Constitution provides that on any measure where a voice vote has been taken on the floor, five members may raise their hands to express opposition to the decision of the presiding officer. The presiding officer will then call for a recorded vote (allowing each member to register their vote electronically on the board displayed at the front of the Chamber, also known as a machine roll call vote). The recorded vote will be published in the *Journal* and serve as the official vote.

FLOOR, THE This is synonymous with the Chamber, as when a member says, “I’m going to the floor.” A member is declared to have the floor when the presiding officer recognizes him or her for a stated purpose.

FOOD GROUPS Terminology denoting the arrangement of committees and subcommittees for calendaring purposes in order to avoid scheduling conflicts among member committee assignments.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT A term used by a bill sponsor to let other members know whether they are in support of an offered amendment. See **AMENDMENT; UNFRIENDLY AMENDMENTS**

-G-

GALLERY The seating area on the floor above the Senate or House chambers where the public may observe a house in session. The gallery to the Speaker's left is the East gallery and to the Speaker's right is the West gallery. Access to the galleries are on the fifth floor of the Capitol.

GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL (GAA) An "appropriations bill" is a general appropriations bill and any other bill the title text of which begins "An act making appropriations," "An act making special appropriations," or "An act making supplemental appropriations."

GENERAL BILL

See **LAWS, GENERAL**

GENERAL LAWS OF LOCAL APPLICATION

See **LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION**

GERMANE Germane or germanity means to be closely related or relevant. Amendments must be germane to the subject of the bill being considered.

GERRYMANDERING Used in a critical sense, this is the process of drawing district boundaries during an apportionment for the purpose of partisan or factional advantage. The word derives its name from Governor Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, whose party in 1812 re-districted a county with boundaries bearing a fancied resemblance to a salamander. In the 2010 election, Florida voters added Article III, Sections 20-21, to the Florida Constitution establishing standards for drawing congressional and state legislative districts to prevent gerrymandering.

GLITCH BILL A term suggesting the bill as enacted has some technical error or omission that necessitates the "glitch bill" and such changes do not alter the original intent of the bill.

GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION

See **CALL, THE**

GRANDFATHER CLAUSE Laws providing an exemption of persons presently impacted or otherwise affected. The clause can be temporary in nature.

-H-

HOLD-HARMLESS CLAUSE A guarantee that, in establishing a new formula for the distribution of funds, no area or entity will receive less than it did in the past.

IMMEDIATELY CERTIFIED (IC) When one body sends the bill to the other on the same day it is passed. By rule, the chambers will hold onto a bill in case the body wants to reconsider the measure. A member may move to waive the rules by a two-thirds vote to immediately certify a measure. During the last 14 days of any session, all measures are immediately certified.

IMPEACHMENT The process by which state officers not subject to removal by the Governor can be accused of the constitutional offense of “misdemeanor in office.” This is unrelated to the crimes usually classified as misdemeanors. The House may, by a two-thirds vote of the members voting, impeach the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, members of the Cabinet, justices of the Supreme Court, judges of District Courts of Appeal, judges of circuit courts, and judges of county courts. After impeachment, a trial is held in the Senate, where a two-thirds vote of the senators present is necessary for conviction.
See **DISCIPLINE**

IMPLEMENTING BILL The bill is intended to amend Florida Statutes to resolve any potential conflict between an appropriations decision in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) and a specific provision of Florida Statutes. Each section is for the coming fiscal year only. It ties to one or more specific appropriation of the GAA. It amends a specific law, instead of “notwithstanding any law to the contrary,” and is repealed July 1 of the following year when the GAA expires.

INSTANTER Latin for “immediately.” A motion to take up a measure immediately.

INTERIM The period between regular sessions. During the interim, committee meetings are held as scheduled by the Speaker or President.

INTERIM CALENDAR The Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate publish a calendar, during the months of interim committee meetings, listing interim meeting dates, filed bills with their committee references, agendas of committee meetings, and members’ committee assignments.

INTRODUCER This terminology is used in the Senate to describe the first-named sponsor of a bill.
See **SPONSOR**

INTRODUCTION The process of bringing a proposed bill before the Legislature. Members approve their bill drafts prepared by the bill drafting services and a bill number is assigned to each bill. The bill title is printed in the *Journal* of the House and Senate, which constitutes first reading and introduction.
See **FIRST READING**

-J-

JOINT RESOLUTION Amendments to the State Constitution can be proposed by joint resolutions. These are passed by a vote of three-fifths of the membership of each house of the Legislature. Joint resolutions do not require action by the Governor, and instead go on the ballot for approval or rejection.

JOINT SESSIONS, JOINT MEETINGS Generally, the Legislature meets in Joint Session to hear the State of the State by the Governor on the Opening Day of regular session. Article IV, Section 1(e), of the Florida Constitution provides, “The governor shall by message at least once in each regular session inform the legislature concerning the condition of the state, propose such reorganization of the executive department as will promote efficiency and economy, and recommend measures in the public interest.” The Legislature has joint meetings from time to time to hear other addresses.

JOURNAL The official record of the proceedings of a legislative house. Each legislative house issues its own daily Journal. At the end of each session day, the *Journal* is published on the House (or Senate) website and then made available in hard copy form. The *Journal* records only the formal actions of what takes place in session and in committee and subcommittee meetings.

Each legislative day, the presiding officer asks whether there are corrections to the *Journal* of the preceding legislative day. As accepted, the *Journal* becomes the official record.

The *Journal* of each day’s proceedings is available to legislators and to the public the next legislative day. These daily Journals, after careful review for error, are drawn together and reprinted after *sine die*, or final adjournment of the Legislature. This printing of a bound Journal becomes the official permanent record of actions taken in both Chambers. This permanent record is often referred to as the bound *Journal*.

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-L-

LAIID ON THE TABLE

See LAY ON THE TABLE; TABLE

LAW A law is the final product of the legislative process.

LAW BOOKS The Florida Statutes, the codified laws, and the Session Laws—

the acts of a specific legislative session by chapter number—are available to view online at www.leg.state.fl.us. Copies may be purchased from Law Book Services at www.flalegstore.com. Prices depend upon the size of the publication.
See ACT; STATUTES

LAWS, GENERAL A general law is a law intended to have statewide application. Many laws pass relating to less than the whole state and are still legally “general laws.” The Supreme Court of Florida, in an early case, declared that “every law is general which includes in its provisions all persons or things of the same genus.” A law does not have to be universal in application to be a general law. Laws relating to the location of the state capitol, a state university, a state prison, or a state hospital are local in character, but they directly or indirectly affect every citizen of the state and are therefore regarded as general laws.

See STATUTES

LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION A general law which, by its nature, has application only to a portion of the state. Thus, a statute relating to regions of the state or to subjects or persons or things as a class, based upon proper distinctions and differences that are peculiar or appropriate to the class, is a general law of local application. Since such a law is not a “local bill,” it does not have to be advertised or made subject to a referendum. Examples of possible bases for classification would be: all coastal counties, all counties which permit sales of alcoholic beverages by the drink, or all counties having an elected school superintendent. Other examples would include acts which relate to a particular circuit court, a state university, or to the state capitol building.

LAWS, RELIEF OR CLAIM

See CLAIM BILL

LAY ON THE TABLE Laying a bill on the table enables the body to move on to the next order of business without completing action on the bill under discussion while leaving it in a position which could allow its reintroduction. A bill, motion, or amendment laid upon the table is usually dead.

See TABLE

LEAGIS A business process management and automation system for creating, processing, and tracking legislation for the Florida Legislature. Processes such as drafting and filing of bills and amendments, bill cosponsorship, committee meeting notices, Calendar, *Journal*, bill tracking and reports, as well as real-time live chamber actions, are all included in the Leagis system. Leagis also feeds the House website, www.myfloridahouse.gov.

LEGISLATIVE DAY In the Florida Legislature, a legislative day extends from the time of convening until adjournment. The Florida Constitution provides for a regular session of 60 consecutive calendar days. By rule, however, a legislative day is defined as a day when the Legislature convenes and a quorum is present.

LINE ITEM An item that appears in a general appropriations bill on a separate line, apart from the overall funding of an agency. For example, in the appropriation for parks generally, there may be funds for a specific park.

LINE-ITEM VETO The Governor has the power to selectively veto items in appropriations bills. Usually, this means the General Appropriations Act or the Public Education Capital Outlay Bill (PECO).

If the Governor seeks to veto any qualification or restriction in a general appropriations bill, he/she must also veto the appropriation to which it relates. An attempted exercise of the veto power in any other manner is absolutely forbidden, regardless of the motivation.

LINKED BILL A bill that takes effect only if another bill passes. The most common linked bills are a public records exemption or tax/fee increase.

LOBBYIST An individual paid to influence or attempt to influence legislative action or non-action through oral or written communication or an attempt to obtain the goodwill of a member or employee of the Legislature.

The term derives from the fact that lobbyists usually frequent the lobby adjacent to the chambers of the Senate and the House, either seeking to buttonhole legislators as they walk to and from the chambers or awaiting legislative action that might affect their interest.

LOCAL BILL

See **LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION**

-M-

MAIN MOTION or **MAIN QUESTION** The item that the body is considering at that moment. This could be a specific bill, amendment, or motion.

MAJORITY LEADER The chairperson of the majority party. The Majority Leader is appointed to the position by the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate.

MEMORIAL Whenever the Legislature formally expresses its views to the Federal Government, it does so through a memorial.

MESSAGE The House and the Senate communicate with each other by messages. Each bill is transmitted from one house to the other by a document that tells what action has been taken. In some instances, one house may ask the other to take further action.

MINORITY LEADER The elected leader of the party who is not in the majority.

MOTION Action on the floor of a legislative chamber or in a committee meeting that results almost invariably from some member “moving” to take a particular action. The Rules determine the importance (or precedence) of a motion and whether its consideration may be debated.

-N-

NONRECURRING Funding available for one year in the General Appropriations Bill, this would require future legislative action for continued funding.

-O-

OMBUDSMAN Someone appointed by the government to receive and investigate complaints about public agencies. In addition, the District Staff Ombudsman in the Florida House of Representatives works to provide assistance and accountability to District Staff.

OMNIBUS BILL

See **TRAIN**

OPEN MEETING Pursuant to the Florida Constitution, all meetings between more than two legislators, or between the Governor, the President of the Senate, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives, where the purpose is to agree upon formal legislative action that will be taken at a subsequent time, or at which formal legislative action is taken, shall be reasonably open to the public. This is done so that Florida’s government operates “in the sunshine”.

ORDER OF BUSINESS The order in which business is taken up in the Legislature each day of the regular session. The daily order of business in the House is:

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Roll Call
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Correction of the *Journal*
6. Communications
7. Messages from the Senate
8. Reports of Committees
9. Motions Relating to Committee and Subcommittee References
10. Matters on Reconsideration

11. Bills and Joint Resolutions on Third Reading
12. Special Orders
13. House Resolutions
14. Unfinished Business
15. Introduction and Reference

The Senate order of business is slightly different:

1. Roll Call
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Reports of Committees
5. Motions Relating to Committee Reference
6. Messages from the Governor and Other Executive Communications
7. Messages from the House of Representatives
8. Matters on Reconsideration
9. Consideration of Bills on Third Reading
10. Special Order Calendars
11. Consideration of Bills on Second Reading
12. Correction and Approval of Journal
13. Unfinished Business

ORGANIZATION SESSION By constitutional mandate, the Legislature meets on the 14th day after the general election solely for the purpose of organizing. Organizing means the taking of the oath by members, election of officers, and adoption of Rules.

-P-

PAGES/MESSENGERS Pages and Messengers are students who come to the Capitol and serve one week during the 60-day Regular Legislative Session. Pages and Messengers assist the representatives and their staff during the Capitol's busiest time of year, while observing state government in action. Pages (grades 6-8) assist the representatives in the House Chamber whenever the House is in session. Messengers (grades 9-12) assist representatives and staff by delivering time-sensitive messages throughout the entire Capitol Complex.

At the end of each week, Pages and Messengers receive formal letters signifying how many community service hours they have earned for their work during Session. Students may earn up to 40 hours of service for their week of work in the Capitol. In the Senate, only Pages are employed. They are between 16 and 18 years of age, and they fulfill both roles. Senate Pages can receive a stipend,

earn credit hours, or receive half of each.

PASSED To be approved by the body. Bills and joint resolutions are passed. Memorials, other resolutions, amendments, and motions are adopted.
See **ADOPTED**

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

See **PRIVILEGE**

POINT OF ORDER The cry of “Point of order!” is heard occasionally during legislative proceedings. It means that a member wishes to challenge either what is happening or what he or she thinks may be about to happen. Generally, the member argues the action is a departure from the proper conduct of business or rules of the body. If, for example, the House has agreed to adjourn at 4 p.m. and debate continues beyond that hour, a member likely will interrupt with, “Point of order, Mr. Speaker!” This cry will bring the session to an immediate halt. The Speaker will, upon hearing the point, rule immediately or refer it to the Rules Chair for a recommendation.

PREAMBLE The preamble, usually to a resolution but sometimes to a bill, is a recital of the reasons for the action being taken. In a resolution, it is the text between the first “Whereas” and the “Therefore, Be It Resolved.”

PRECEDENTS Rulings of presiding officers on questions of order are referred to as precedents. Such rulings are not binding.

PRESIDENT The presiding officer of the Senate, having been designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full Senate.

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE The President Pro Tempore is designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the body. At the call of the President, he or she will preside over the Senate to ease the burden upon the President from time to time during a day, although the President may ask any other member to perform this service. The President Pro Tempore presides in the absence of the President when no other member has been designated.

PREVIOUS QUESTION A motion in the House for the previous question has the result, if adopted, of ending debate and bringing a matter to a vote. If moved and agreed to on a bill, it prevents the consideration of further amendments and requires the House to vote upon the amendment before the House. Closing statements are limited to three minutes each by a proponent and an opponent. The Senate does not allow this motion.

PRIME COSPONSOR The second-named sponsor of a bill in the House. Listed after the member who filed the bill, the prime cosponsor will occasionally stand with the first-named sponsor while the bill is being heard in committee

or on the floor. The prime cosponsor asks and is approved by the first-named sponsor and their name will appear on the title of the bill.

See **COSPONSOR; FIRST-NAMED SPONSOR; PRIME SPONSOR; SPONSOR**

PRIME SPONSOR The House member submitting a bill for introduction is known as the “prime sponsor” (by rule, the “first-named” sponsor). The prime sponsor’s name appears first, not only on the original bill, but in the printing of the bill, reference to the bill in Leagis, and all other references.

See **SPONSOR; FIRST-NAMED SPONSOR; PRIME COSPONSOR**

PRIVILEGE This word has four separate legislative meanings:

(1) A motion possesses privilege in the sense of priority. A motion to adjourn at a time certain, for example, enjoys the highest priority, and must be considered ahead of all other motions.

(2) Floor privileges in the House are extended by the presiding officer enabling others to be in the Chamber of the House during session when the public is excluded.

(3) There are also questions of privilege. A legislator may raise the question of privilege on his or her own behalf— “personal privilege”—or on behalf of the legislative body collectively. Recognition to speak “on the welfare of the House” is an exercise of the collective privilege.

(4) A legislator who feels aggrieved, perhaps by a suggestion of unworthy motive, may claim the floor on “personal privilege” to speak their mind.

PROOF OF PUBLICATION The Florida Constitution, in Section 10 of Article III, mandates that no special law shall be passed unless notice of intention to seek enactment has been published. This publication, by law, must be done one time at least 30 days before introduction of the bill. The publication should state in terms adequate to put the public on notice what is intended, but not so specifically that an amendment would flaw the notice. The newspaper provides a notarized statement of the fact of publication of this notice. This is known as “proof of publication.” The fact of publication must be recorded in the journal of each house at the time of introduction. It is not necessary to advertise local bills whose effectiveness is conditioned upon acceptance by the affected public in a referendum.

See **LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION; REFERENDUM**

PROPER POSTURE A term used to show that all rules and protocol have been followed and that further action can now occur on the item.

PROPOSED COMMITTEE BILL A draft legislative measure taken up by a committee for the purpose of considering whether to introduce it in the name of the committee.

PROVISO Language generally qualifying or restricting an item in the General Appropriations Bill. Primarily it is a determination by the Legislature that a

specific appropriation is worthwhile only if contingent upon a certain event or fact.

PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION Chapters 11 and 119 of the Florida Statutes state which records must be made available to the public upon request and which do not. Some reasons for a document being exempt include a draft that has not been provided to anyone outside of the Legislature, or a document containing an employee's personal medical information.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD The general appropriations bill must be furnished to each member of the Legislature, each member of the Cabinet, the Governor, and the Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court at least 72 hours before final passage of the bill by either house of the Legislature in the form that the bill will be presented to the Governor (Article III, s. 19(d), Florida Constitution). By Joint Rule, implementing or conforming bills must be furnished 24 hours before final passage.

-Q-

QUORUM The Constitution requires a majority of the members elected to a house to be present for the transacting of legislative business. Thus, a quorum is one more than half of the membership.

QUORUM CALL Whenever the House or Senate reconvenes after a recess, either overnight or during the legislative day, there will be a quorum call to establish the presence of a majority for the lawful transacting of business. A quorum call is often taken just before the taking of the vote on a controversial measure. This serves the purpose of putting legislators on notice that a significant roll call is about to be taken and brings to their seats those who may be out of the Chamber.

-R-

RANKING MEMBER A committee or subcommittee member from the Minority Conference who has been named by the Minority Leader and approved by the Speaker to serve as a resource, or lead, for Minority Conference members and the Minority Leader on all matters before the committee. The Ranking Member assists fellow caucus members in preparation for deliberations, debate, and votes in the committee or subcommittee, and may serve as a spokesperson for the Minority Conference on matters related to the committee or subcommittee at the direction of the Minority Leader.

See **MINORITY LEADER**

READINGS Each bill or proposed constitutional amendment must receive

three readings on three separate days, unless waived by a two-thirds vote of the members voting in each legislative house before passage. The reading of the title only typically suffices. This reading of the title is usually brief, often just a few words, but enough to describe the subject of the bill. A “reading” may be regarded as a stage in the progress of legislation.

Certain things happen on these different stages in the movement of a bill through each house. On “first reading,” a bill is introduced. “First reading” now is almost exclusively done by publication in the *Journal*. Amendments generally are considered on “second reading.” Debate and final passage occur on “third reading.”

REAPPORTIONMENT and REDISTRICTING Legislative action taken after each 10-year census to establish the boundaries for senatorial and representative districts in accordance with federal and state law.

RECALL When a legislative house seeks return of a bill from the other house, or from the Governor, its “recall” is asked. A “message”—a request in writing—is sent to the other legislative house. A concurrent resolution is needed to recall a bill from the Governor because the Supreme Court held that it is not enough for one house to stop action on a measure that already has passed both.

RECESS Recess is the period within a legislative day that a body is not in session after having been convened. Recess includes stated periods, such as those for lunch, and informal periods, when the members await the presiding officer’s call to return. An informal recess may be necessitated by a caucus to determine a position or while the House awaits the arrival of the Senate for a joint session.

RECOMMIT To send a bill on the Calendar back to a committee by a majority vote in the House. In the Senate, it is by a two-thirds vote of the senators present. The committee of further consideration may or may not be one of those to which the bill was originally referred.

RECONSIDERATION The motion by which the House or a committee reverses an action. Each legislative house has at least two opportunities to consider nearly every action taken. The motion can be made only by someone who voted on the prevailing side or by any member in the case of a voice vote or tie vote. When either legislative house has a change of mind about any action taken during the course of passing a bill, it is the procedure to back up to the appropriate stage by reconsidering those actions that followed.

RECURRING Funding available each year in the General Appropriations Bill under a permanent constitutional or statutory expenditure authorization which exists from year to year without further legislative action.

REFERENCE or REFERRAL The process by which a presiding officer transmits a bill to one or more committees is known as “reference.” For example, the Speaker may refer a bill to committees, subcommittees, or the Calendar.

REFERENDUM A local vote in order to enact a bill passed by the Legislature. The Florida Constitution waives the necessity for advance notice of the passage of special or local laws in those instances where such local laws become operative only by an approving vote of the people of the affected community. See **LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION**

REFUSE TO CONCUR The message sent by a chamber when it refuses to agree with the other house’s adopted amendments.

REFUSE TO RECEDE The message sent by a chamber when a motion to concur has been requested by one chamber and the other chamber refuses to change their position on legislation being amended.

RELIEF BILLS

See **CLAIM BILL**

REPEALER BILLS Bills that, for purposes of the House Rules, only delete, without substantive replacement, provisions of the Florida Statutes or *Laws of Florida*.

RESOLUTION A one-house bill used for matters not involving the other house. It is often ceremonial or congratulatory in nature. Resolutions do not require the signature of the Governor and they do not become law.

REVERSE SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

See **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE**

REVISER’S BILLS Florida maintains a continuous revision of its statutes. This means the Division of Law Revision integrates new general laws into the Florida Statutes so they will always be reasonably up-to-date. Reviser’s bills are prepared by the division pursuant to the authority granted to the Office of Legislative Services. No bill other than those prepared by the reviser of statutes may be identified as a reviser’s bill.

ROLL CALL The calling of the names of members of a legislative body, most particularly a committee or subcommittee, either to determine the presence of a quorum or to act upon a matter before it for disposition. In House and Senate sessions, the roll is taken by the voting machine.

RULES The Constitution empowers each house to determine how it shall go about its daily conduct of business. Rules governing a legislative term are adopted during Organization Session but may be amended at any time. Rules

can be waived by a two-thirds vote of the members voting. Rules may be changed with proper notice by a majority vote of the members.

-S-

SEAL Adopted by House and Senate rule, each legislative house has an official seal to authenticate its documents.

SEATING CHALLENGE When there is a question in the constitutional qualifications or election of a legislator-elect.

Article III, Section 2, of the Florida Constitution, makes each house the *sole* judge of its members' qualifications, and Article III, Section 15(c), establishes the standing qualifications for a legislator, who must be "an elector and resident of the district from which elected."

SEATING IN THE HOUSE Seating in the House Chamber is determined by the Speaker. Typically, House leaders sit on the front row and center aisle, majority party members sit toward the front, and minority party members sit toward the rear of the Chamber. Some areas are favored by members for different reasons. Those seated along the aisle in front of the rostrum may feel they enjoy some advantage in catching the Speaker's eye for the purpose of recognition. Other members prefer locations near the outside aisles for convenience in access to their seats.

SEATING IN THE SENATE Seating in the Senate Chamber is determined by the President.

SEEING FIVE HANDS

See **SHOW OF HANDS**

SELECT COMMITTEE A select committee is created by the presiding officer for the purpose of dealing with a specific issue. Unlike standing committees, which remain in existence for the duration of the session, a select committee usually goes out of existence when the purpose for which it was selected has been accomplished.

SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

See **PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

SENATE SECRETARY

See **CLERK/SECRETARY**

SERGEANT AT ARMS The House and Senate Sergeants at Arms are charged with maintaining order and security of the members and the Chamber under

the direction of the presiding officer. The Sergeant also performs other duties under the command and supervision of the presiding officer.

SESSION This term has two legislative meanings. A session may be the daily meeting of the full membership of the Senate or House for the purpose of considering legislation or conducting other legislative business. It also may be the regular, special, extended, or organization session, meaning the whole period for which the Legislature has been called together.

SESSION LAWS The *Laws of Florida* are a set of bound volumes, published each year, containing the annual work product (acts, resolutions, and memorials) of the Legislature.

SESSIONS, LENGTH OF In accordance with the Florida Constitution, a regular session of the Legislature shall not exceed 60 consecutive days and a special session shall not exceed 20 consecutive days, unless extended beyond such limit by a three-fifths vote of the members voting of each house. During such extension, no new business may be taken up in either house without the consent of two-thirds of its membership.

See **EXTENDED SESSION**

SEVERABILITY CLAUSE A severability clause provides that should a court declare one portion of a law invalid it would be the stated intention of the Legislature that the remainder should stand. In 1969, however, the Florida Supreme Court stated that the absence of a severability clause in a statute would not prevent the courts from exercising their inherent power to preserve the constitutionality of the act by eliminating invalid material.

SHOW OF HANDS The Florida Constitution requires a roll call, recorded in the *Journal*, on any question when five members request this. They make this request by raising a hand. This is known as the show of hands or “seeing five hands.” Similarly, upon request of any two members of a committee, the vote shall be taken by roll call.

SINE DIE This Latin term means “without day.” It is the action that concludes a session of the Legislature. A concurrent resolution may be adopted by the two houses to fix the hour of adjournment *sine die*.

See **ADJOURNMENT**

SINGLE SUBJECT The Florida Constitution states that every law shall embrace but one subject and matter properly connected therewith, and the subject shall be briefly expressed in the title. No law shall be revised or amended by reference to its title only. Laws to revise or amend shall set out in full the revised or amended act, section, subsection or paragraph of a section.

SPEAKER The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. The

Speaker is designated by the majority party meeting in conference and then elected by the entire House membership for a term of two years. The Speaker appoints the members of all committees and subcommittees and designates the chair and vice chair of each. The Speaker refers bills and other legislation to committees and subcommittees; presides over the meetings of the House; recognizes those members who wish to speak; accepts motions at pleasure; signs all legislative acts (passed bills and resolutions) and vouchers for payment from House funds; and signs subpoenas compelling the appearance of persons before committees, in and out of session. The Speaker also designates temporary presiding officers who serve in his or her absence.
See **CHAIR**

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE The Speaker *pro tempore* of the House of Representatives is designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the body. At the call of the Speaker, he or she will preside over the House to ease the burden upon the Speaker from time to time during a day, although the Speaker may ask any other member to perform this service. The Speaker *pro tempore* presides in the absence of the Speaker when no other member has been designated.

SPECIAL LAWS

See **LAWS, GENERAL OF LOCAL APPLICATION; REFERENDUM**

SPECIAL ORDER LETTER A document voted on by the Rules Committee stating which bills will be heard on Second Reading on the floor and in what order. That order is known as the Special Order Calendar.

SPECIAL MASTER An attorney appointed by the presiding officer to conduct hearings and determine liability, proximate cause, and damages regarding claims against government entities or legislators. Special Masters may prepare final reports containing findings of fact, conclusions of law, and recommendations.
See **CLAIM BILL**

SPECIAL SESSIONS, IDENTIFICATION Special sessions are identified by letters, “A,” “B,” etc. The letters are used beginning with “A” for the first special session of each two-year term. At the beginning of the next term, the identification starts over with “A.”
See **TERM**

SPONSOR A bill’s sponsor is understood to be the representative introducing it, although introduction may be done at the request of someone not a member. The Governor, for example, may recommend the passage of a bill, but only a member of the Legislature may introduce this bill and become its sponsor. The Senate uses the term “introducer.”
See **PRIME SPONSOR; FIRST-NAMED SPONSOR; INTRODUCER**

STANDING COMMITTEE A standing committee is created by rule with

continuing authority to consider matters within its subject field, including bills filed by members of the houses. The name of the committee usually indicates its policy jurisdiction.

STATUTES Acts that amend or create law are compiled, edited, and published annually in the Florida Statutes. The Law Revision Division of the Legislature edits and publishes the Florida Statutes following each regular session. Sets of the Florida Statutes may be purchased from Law Book Services at www.flalegstore.com and viewed online at www.leg.state.fl.us.

See **LAW BOOKS; LAWS, GENERAL**

SUBCOMMITTEE Smaller groups of members that are organizationally under committees and address a more specific subset of policy issues than committees. Often times when legislation is passed by a subcommittee, it will also be heard by at least one full committee.

SUBSTITUTION A motion that lays one bill on the table and takes up the bill from the other chamber. Substituting is done so that there is one final product passed and sent to the Governor.

SUSPENSION Under Article IV, Section 7, of the Florida Constitution, the Governor may temporarily relieve a public official from their duties. The Senate then decides in Executive Session whether to remove or reinstate that public official.

See **CONFIRMATION; EXECUTIVE SESSION**

-T-

TABLE In legislative parlance, “laying” something “on the table” usually means disposing of the matter for the legislative session. A bill unfavorably reported by a committee is “laid on the table.” A motion to “lay on the table” also has the effect of disposing of a matter without further debate, except that the sponsor of the measure under consideration possesses the right to talk for an additional five minutes. When the House takes up a Senate bill in lieu of the House bill, the House bill is “laid on the table.”

See **LAY ON THE TABLE**

TAXATION AND BUDGET REFORM COMMISSION Article XI, Section 6, of the Florida Constitution requires the establishment of a Taxation and Budget Reform Commission every 20 years to “examine the state budgetary process, the revenue needs and expenditure processes of the state, the appropriateness of the tax structure of the state, and governmental productivity and efficiency; review policy as it relates to the ability of state and local government to tax and adequately fund governmental operations and capital facilities required to meet the state’s needs during the next twenty year

period...” Members are selected by the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and President of the Senate.

TECHNICAL AMENDMENT This is an amendment that is used in the House of Representatives to make technical corrections of a purely non-substantive nature. All such amendments are prepared by the House Bill Drafting Service and may only be introduced in the name of the Rules Committee. The amendments are adopted *pro forma* without discussion. Individual members sometime introduce so-called technical or “corrective” amendments. They are characterized as “technical” by the sponsor and are considered as such only by those who are so persuaded.

TEMPORARILY POSTPONE (TP) A motion causing a measure to be set aside but retained on the desk.

TERM The Florida Constitution (Article III, Section 15) fixes the term of representatives at two years and the term of senators at four years. A vacancy may be filled only by the people in an election. Legislators take office upon election.

TERM LIMITS By initiative petition, the Florida Constitution was amended in 1992 to limit terms of office for state legislators, Florida’s Congressional Delegation, Lieutenant Governor, and Cabinet officers to eight consecutive years.

TIE VOTE When the body is equally divided on any measure, the question is defeated. In effect, a tie vote defeats the bill.

TITLE The Florida Constitution requires each bill to be prefaced by a concise statement of its contents. This statement is known as the “title.” The Florida Supreme Court, in 1983, defined three types of title: the caption title (i.e., “SB 83”); the short title, (i.e., “An act relating to the possession of controlled substances”); and a full title which may be lengthy. The court held that each of these met the requirements of the Constitution for readings.

TITLE AMENDMENT An amendment to the title of a bill.

TP’ed A “TP’ed” bill or amendment is one the consideration of which has been temporarily postponed or deferred, either in the Chamber, on the *Calendar*, or in committee or subcommittee.

TRAIN A bill relating to a single subject, but combining many aspects. The legislative train often combines the good and the bad for individual legislators as well as the Governor.
See **OMNIBUS BILL**

TRIBUTE Proclamations by individual legislators used to commemorate local

achievement, condolences, or other recognition. A tribute does not require passage by the House and is not an expression of the House or the Legislature.

TRUST FUND BILL This sets up a special account into which certain taxes or fees are deposited (e.g., license fees) and out of which funds are disbursed for a specific and exclusive purpose. Article III, Section 19(f), of the Florida Constitution requires that a trust fund be created in a bill with no other content and be passed by a three-fifths vote of the membership of each house.

-U-

UNFINISHED BUSINESS Business on which action was undertaken but not completed goes to a separate calendar category identified as “Unfinished Business.” This calendar will enable the sponsor time to try to work out problems. Generally speaking, the House will not reach the order of business of *Unfinished Business* and the bill will be considered again only when the sponsor moves to take it up by a waiver of the rules.

UNFRIENDLY AMENDMENT A term used by a bill sponsor to let other members know they are not in support of an offered amendment.
See **AMENDMENT; FRIENDLY AMENDMENT**

-V-

VEHICLE A bill that can be amended to encompass another bill (or bills) that pertains to the same subject area.

VETO The Governor’s constitutional check of preventing a bill from becoming law. This is the one of three actions available to the Governor after a bill’s final passage and the only one that prevents a bill from becoming law. Veto messages may be considered at the next special or regular session by the Legislature to override the veto by a two-thirds vote of each body.

VETO OVERRIDE The Constitutional ability of the Legislature to override the Governor’s veto by a vote of two-thirds of members voting in each house.

VOICE VOTE As the words indicate, this is a vote taken orally, with “yeas” for affirmative votes and “nays” for negative. The presiding officer states the action to be applied. If there is disagreement on the presiding officer’s statement, members can go to the board for a machine roll call by raising the necessary five hands. A voice vote cannot be used for passage of a bill or joint resolution, as the Florida Constitution (Article III, Section 7) requires a recording of each member’s vote.

VOTE In the Legislature, this is the means of expressing the collective judgment. The Constitution requires the recorded yeas and nays of the individual members on the final passage of all legislation. A voice vote will suffice for adoption of amendments, motions, resolutions, and memorials although a roll call can be obtained even on these if five members, by a show of hands, demand a recorded vote or if the Speaker directs the Clerk to open the vote board for a recorded vote.

Generally, bills are passed by a majority of the members, a quorum being present. However, a bill for a special election on a proposed amendment to the State Constitution requires for passage the approval of three-fourths of the members elected. The vote required for submission to the electorate of a proposed amendment to the State Constitution is three-fifths of the membership.

-W-

WAIVE THE RULES A phrase heard in the Legislature is “I move the rules be waived.” The Constitution and the Rules of the Senate and House provide a series of braking actions on the passage of bills (e.g., the reading on three separate days). If two-thirds of the members present are agreeable to foregoing such procedural steps, then a motion to waive the rules is in order. The motion is not available in committees or subcommittees.

WELL The podium in the area between the Clerk’s desk and the first rows of seats in the House Chamber is known as the Well. Legislators may request permission to “go to the Well” when they wish to present something they deem of special importance. The Well is not used as frequently now as in the days before each member had access to a microphone. Some members may never have the opportunity to speak from the Well.

A possible derivation of the term “well” is the location in early House Chambers from which a member could speak and easily make himself understood without raising his voice. Hence, as though speaking “down a well.”

WHEREAS CLAUSE The whereas clause found in some laws is an introductory or prefatory statement. It usually is a statement of the facts that caused the Legislature to act. The clause is not an essential portion of the law. It appears ahead of the enacting clause.

WHIP The whips, along with their deputies and assistants, serve as the eyes and ears of the majority or minority leadership. They seek to determine how the members of their political party feel about issues and situations, and in turn inform the members assigned to them how the leadership feels. The name derives in English parliamentary usage from the fox-hunting functionary who controls the movement of the hounds and is called the whip-in.

WITHDRAW PRIOR TO INTRODUCTION In accordance with the House Rules, a request to withdraw a bill prior to introduction by the sponsor of the bill must be sent by letter or email to the Clerk of the House. This action can be done between the filing of the bill and prior to the convening time of the first day of session. In accordance with the House Rules, a bill that has been introduced during a legislative session can be withdrawn from further consideration and requires a motion made on the floor followed by a two-thirds vote.

WITHOUT OBJECTION Much of the business of the chambers is done “without objection.” This means the presiding officer has not put a motion to the body to dispose of a matter proposed by a member. For example, for a legislator to withdraw from further consideration a bill he or she has introduced but no longer wishes to pursue. “Without objection” is the same as saying “by unanimous consent.” For example: “Without objection show the bill withdrawn.”

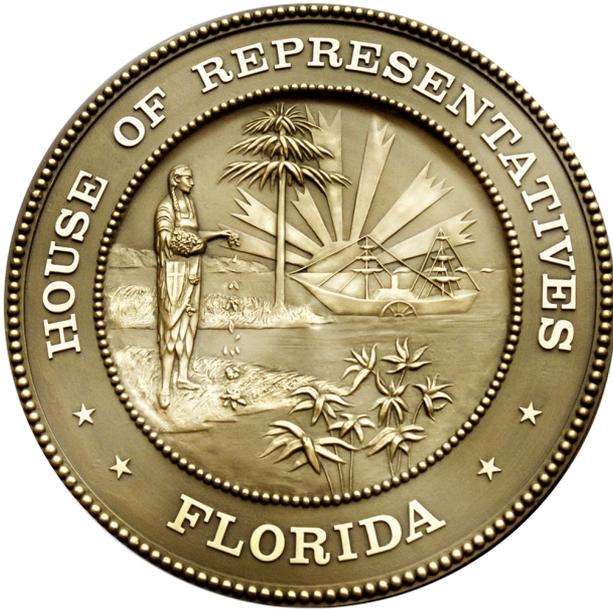
-X-

-Y-

YIELD This may be used in two ways. A member may yield to another, usually for a question, but without surrendering the floor. Or, a motion may yield to another of higher dignity.

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The Florida House of Representatives



COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

Acronym	Name	Definition
AA	Administrative Assistant	A staff member tasked with handling the administrative functions of a committee or office.
AG	Attorney General	A statewide constitutional officer of Florida. The Attorney General is the chief legal officer in Florida.
AHCA	Agency for Health Care Administration	The agency that is responsible for the administration of the Florida Medicaid program, licensure, and regulation of Florida's health facilities.
APB	Appropriations Project Bill	A bill requesting a specific line item in the General Appropriations Act.
APD	Agency for Persons with Disabilities	The agency that is tasked with serving the needs of Floridians with developmental disabilities.
AST	Agency for State Technology	The agency established to develop and publish information technology policy for the management of the state's information technology resources, oversee the state's essential technology projects, manage the State Data Center, and house Florida's Chief Information Officer.
BOG	Florida Board of Governors	The board oversees the operation and management of the Florida public university system's twelve institutions.
C	Capitol Building	The largest and central building of the Capitol Complex.
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	A statewide constitutional officer of Florida. The Chief Financial Officer oversees the Division of Financial Services.
CS	Committee Substitute	A bill filed to reflect changes made in a committee. The level of Committee Substitute is shown in the bill number with a "CS/" before the bill.
DACS	Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	The department supports and promotes Florida agriculture, protects the environment, safeguards consumers, and ensures the safety and wholesomeness of food. The department is overseen by the Commissioner of Agriculture & Consumer Services.
DBPR	Department of Business and Professional Regulation	The agency charged with licensing and regulating businesses and professionals.
DC	Department of Corrections	The agency that oversees Florida's public prisons and parole operations.
DCF	Department of Children and Families	The agency that oversees Adult Protective Services, Child Welfare, Refugee Services, and Public Benefits.

DEM	Division of Emergency Management	The division plans for and responds to both natural and man-made disasters. These range from floods and hurricanes to incidents involving hazardous materials or nuclear power.
DEO	Department of Economic Opportunity	The agency assists the Governor in advancing Florida's economy by championing the state's economic development vision and by administering state and federal programs and initiatives to help visitors, citizens, businesses, and communities.
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection	The department is the state's lead agency for environmental management and stewardship, protecting our air, water, and land.
DFS	Department of Financial Services	The department is responsible for overseeing the state's finances, collecting revenue, paying state bills, auditing state agencies, regulating cemeteries and funerals, and handling fires and arsons. This office is headed by the Chief Financial Officer.
DHSMV	Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles	The state's lead agency for providing highway safety and security.
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice	The lead agency for reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention, and treatment services.
DLA	Department of Legal Affairs	This department oversees state regulations that protect consumer interests in many types of transactions. This department is overseen by the Attorney General.
DMA	Department of Military Affairs	The department that provides management oversight of the Florida National Guard, as well as units and personnel ready to support national security objectives.
DMS	Department of Management Services	The business arm of Florida government. This agency is in charge of supporting sister agencies as well as current and former state employees with workforce and business-related functions.
DOAH	Division of Administrative Hearings	The division is Florida's central body for reviewing cases related to administrative law.
DOE	Department of Education	The department serves as the single repository of education data from school districts, state and community colleges, universities, and independent postsecondary institutions, allowing the tracking of student performance over time and across varying education sectors.
DOEA	Department of Elder Affairs	The department serves as the primary state agency for administering human services programs for elders and developing policy recommendations for long-term care.
DOH	Department of Health	The department provides basic medical and dental care, regulation of certain aspects of commercial and home construction (septic tanks, pools, restaurants, etc.), investigation and prevention of disease, and other health services.
DOL	Department of Lottery	The agency charged with administering the Florida Lottery.

DOR	Department of Revenue	The state agency in charge of collecting taxes and fees.
DOS	Department of State	The agency in charge of corporation filings, Cultural Affairs, Elections, Historical Resources, and Library and Information Services.
DOT	Department of Transportation	The agency in charge of coordinating the planning and development of a safe, viable, and balanced state transportation system.
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs	The agency charged with providing advocacy and representation for Florida's veterans and to intercede on their behalf with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
EDR	Economic & Demographic Research	The research arm of the legislature principally concerned with forecasting economic and social trends that affect policymaking, revenues, and appropriations.
EOG	Executive Office of the Governor	The function of the office is to assist the Governor in meeting statutory and constitutional duties. Key responsibilities include administering executive planning and budgeting functions and assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of state programs.
FCOR	Florida Commission on Offender Review	The commission functions as a quasi-judicial body by preserving the autonomy needed in postrelease decisions affecting inmates and ex-offenders.
FDLE	Florida Department of Law Enforcement	Florida's law enforcement agency. This agency includes Capitol Police and leads the state's domestic security efforts.
FHFC	Florida Housing Finance Corporation	The FHFC assists in providing a range of affordable housing opportunities for residents.
FS	Florida Statutes	An edited compilation of those general laws of the state, completely recompiled on an annual basis.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent	A staff member tasked with handling the administrative functions of a committee or office.
FWC	Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	The commission that manages and regulates the state's fish and wildlife resources, and enforces related laws.
GAA	General Appropriations Act	The bill authorizing Florida's budget; such bills are generally effective for one year only.
HB	House Bill	Proposed legislation in the House; most bills filed in the House are given this acronym.

HCR	House Concurrent Resolution	A resolution expressing the opinion of both legislative houses. Examples include: receiving the Governor's message, creating Joint Rules, creating Joint Legislative Committees, and notifying the Governor of the time of adjournment <i>sine die</i> .
HJR	House Joint Resolution	A resolution proposing an amendment to the Florida Constitution.
HM	House Memorial	A memorial expressing the opinion of the legislature to the federal government.
HOB	House Office Building	The northern building of the Capitol Complex, this building houses most of the House Committee staff and Chairs.
HR	House Resolution	A formal expression of the opinion of the Florida House of Representatives.
JAC	Justice Administrative Commission	The commission provides administrative services on behalf of 49 judicial-related offices and is the business arm of Florida's judicial branch.
JAPC	Joint Administrative Procedures Committee	A joint legislative committee responsible for a continuous review of administrative rules adopted by state agencies.
JCPO	Joint Committee on Public Counsel Oversight	A joint legislative committee designated with appointing and providing oversight to the Public Counsel, who provides legal representation of the people of Florida before the Public Service Commission.
JLAC	Joint Legislative Auditing Committee	A joint legislative committee responsible for the oversight of state and local governments, educational entities, and state funds appropriated to nongovernmental entities.
JSCB	Joint Select Committee on Collective Bargaining	A joint select legislative committee responsible for resolving an impasse with state workers and agencies in collective bargaining negotiations.
LA	Legislative Assistant	The senior staffer to a representative, this person typically relocates to Tallahassee with the representative during session.
LAD	Legislative Affairs Director	An executive branch staff member who represents and advocates for executive agencies before the legislature.
LBC	Joint Legislative Budget Commission	A joint legislative committee responsible for establishing a long-range financial outlook for the state.
LG	Lieutenant Governor	A constitutional, statewide elected officer. This person succeeds to the office of Governor if it becomes vacant.

LOT	Laid on Table	To dispose of a bill, amendment, or motion without further debate.
OAG	Office of the Attorney General	This office is headed up by the Attorney General, the State's chief legal officer, and is primarily responsible for protecting Florida consumers from various types of misconduct.
OFR	Office of Financial Regulation	The office that provides regulatory oversight for Florida's financial services industry.
OGSR	Open Government Sunset Review	The Open Government Sunset Review Act requires the legislature to review and reenact all exemptions to the public records and open meetings law five years after enactment or substantial amendment of an existing exemption.
OIR	Office of Insurance Regulation	The office responsible for all activities concerning insurers and other risk-bearing entities.
OLITS	Office of Legislative Information Technology Services	A joint legislative office that provides consolidated information technology support to both legislative chambers.
OLS	Office of Legislative Services	A joint legislative office that provides legislative support services that are determined by the President and the Speaker to be necessary and that can be effectively provided jointly to both houses and other units of the legislature.
OPB	Office of Policy and Budget	The office provides coordinated planning, policy development, budgeting and evaluation in support of the Governor, state agencies, and state legislature.
OPD	Office of Professional Development	A House office that provides training and career development opportunities to House members and staff.
OPPAGA	Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability	This office supports the Florida Legislature by providing data, evaluative research, and objective analyses that assist legislative budget and policy deliberations.
OPS	Other Personnel Services	A non-salaried, temporary staff member. In the legislature, this person is typically brought on for the duration of a Regular Session.
PCB	Proposed Committee Bill	A committee proposal or interim project that if passed becomes a Committee Bill and is numbered in the 7000s.
PCS	Proposed Committee Substitute	A committee proposal that if passed would alter an existing bill that is referred to the committee.
PECO	Public Education Capital Outlay	The program that works to fund Florida's long-term need for education facilities.

P&M	Page & Messenger Program	A Florida House program for middle and high school students to observe and serve in the legislative process for one week of Regular Session.
PSC	Public Service Commission	The commission exercises regulatory authority over utilities in one or more of three key areas: rate base/economic regulation; competitive market oversight; and monitoring of safety, reliability, and service issues.
S	Senate Building	The southern building of the Capitol Complex, this building houses most of the Senators' offices.
SB	Senate Bill	Proposed legislation in the Senate; most bills filed in the Senate are given this acronym.
SBA	State Board of Administration of Florida	Manager of the State Pension Plan, as well as other endowments and funds.
SCR	Senate Concurrent Resolution	A resolution expressing the opinion of both legislative houses. Examples include: receiving the Governor's message, creating Joint Rules, creating Joint Legislative Committees, and notifying the Governor of the time of adjournment <i>sine die</i> .
SCS	State Courts System	The judicial branch of Florida's government.
SJR	Senate Joint Resolution	A resolution proposing an amendment to the Florida Constitution.
SM	Senate Memorial	A memorial expressing the opinion of the legislature to the federal government.
TF	Trust Funds	A long-term commitment to use specific revenues for a certain purpose.
TP	Temporarily Postponed	A motion that causes a measure to be set aside but retained on the desk.



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